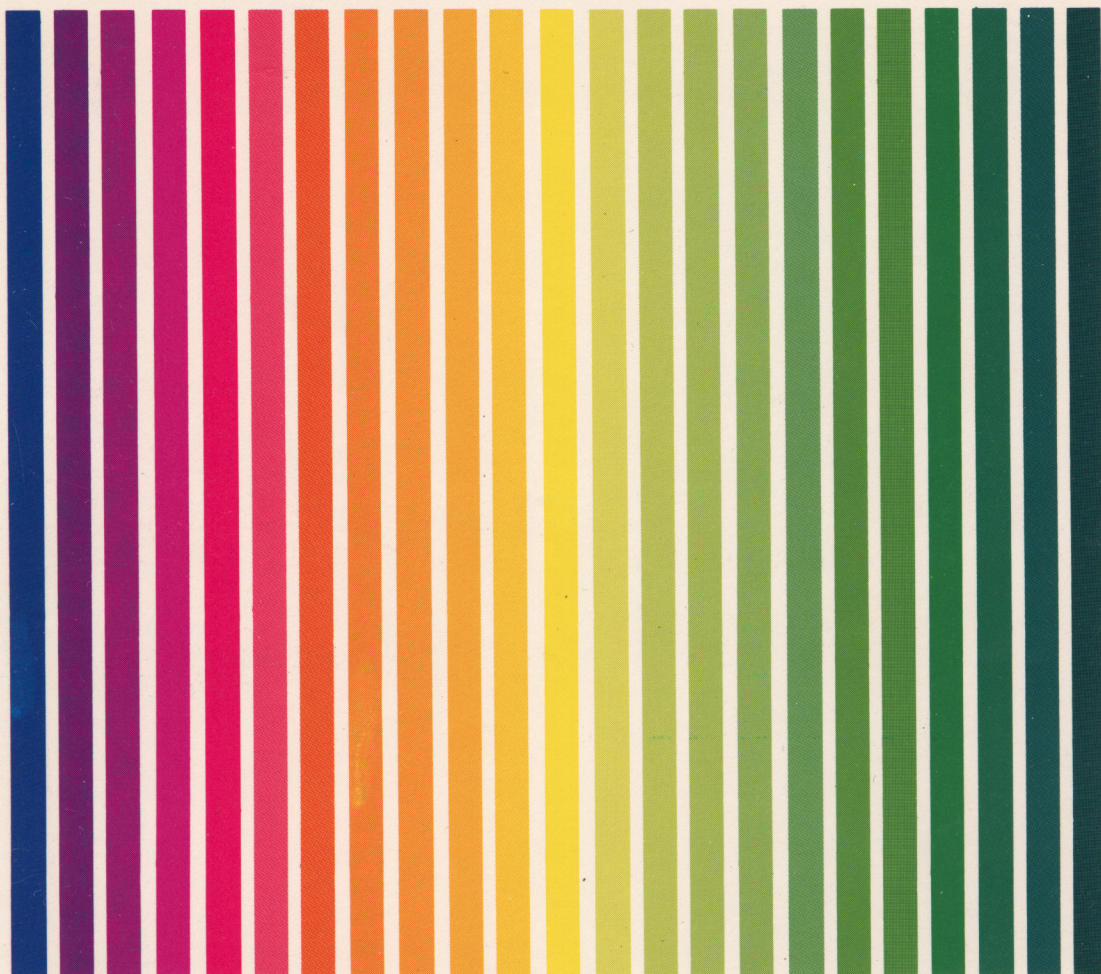


APX ATARI® PROGRAM EXCHANGE



CAVERNS OF MARS

APX-10084 APX-20084

User-Written Software for ATARI Home Computers

CAVERNS OF MARS

APX-10084 APX-20084

CAVERNS OF MARS

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INTRODUCTION

OVERVIEW

Mars has declared war on Terra IV! Martian galactic fleets surround the planet and are demanding its surrender. Luckily, one space fighter has escaped to challenge Mars.

The Terra IV High Command knows that your fighter, the Helicon VII, is the only space fighter equipped to invade Martian Headquarters deep within the CAVERNS OF MARS. Therefore, they've assigned you the dangerous mission of sabotaging the Martian defense system by activating a deadly fusion bomb housed in Martian Headquarters. Once activated, a bomb will level everything around it within a matter of seconds. Unless you reach the surface before the time runs out, you'll perish too!

Your orders: PENETRATE THE MARTIAN DEFENSE SYSTEM, ACTIVATE THE FUSION BOMB IN MARTIAN HEADQUARTERS, AND GET OUT.

The Martians are determined to control Terra IV and they'll build another bomb as quickly as possible. Therefore, if you get out alive, you must start on another mission immediately!

REQUIRED ACCESSORIES

Cassette version

16K RAM

ATARI 410 Program Recorder

Diskette version

24K RAM

ATARI 810 Disk Drive

One ATARI Joystick Controller

GETTING STARTED

SETTING UP FOR YOUR MISSION

1. Remove any program cartridges from the (Left Cartridge) slot of your computer.
2. Plug your joystick controller into the first (the leftmost) controller jack at the front of your computer console.
3. If you have the cassette version of CAVERNS OF MARS:
 - a. Have your computer turned OFF.
 - b. Insert the CAVERNS OF MARS cassette into the program recorder's cassette holder and press REWIND on the recorder until the tape rewinds completely. Then press PLAY to prepare the program recorder for loading the program.
 - c. Turn on the computer while holding down the START key.
 - d. When you hear a beep, release the START key and press the RETURN key. CAVERNS OF MARS will load into computer memory automatically.

If you have the diskette version of CAVERNS OF MARS:

- a. Have your computer turned OFF.
- b. Turn on your disk drive.
- c. When the BUSY light goes out, open the disk drive door and insert the CAVERNS OF MARS diskette with the label in the lower right-hand corner nearest to you. (Use disk drive one if you have more than one drive.)
- d. Turn on your computer and your TV set. CAVERNS OF MARS will load into computer memory automatically.

THE FIRST DISPLAY SCREEN

After CAVERNS OF MARS loads into computer memory, you're transported to the barren, rubble-strewn surface of Mars. Once you've mastered the joystick instructions and the mission briefing information, press the START key on your keyboard and begin your mission. (Or, if you prefer an even greater challenge, skip the rest of these instructions, press the START key, and face the consequences!)

USING YOUR JOYSTICK CONTROLLER

Hold your joystick controller so that the red button is at the top left, toward your TV screen. Use the joystick to move your fighter through the caverns. The movements are as follows:

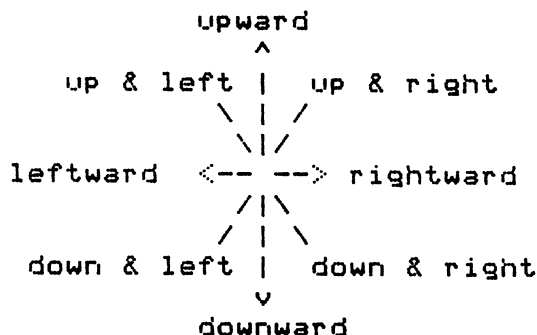


Figure 1 Joystick Movements

Press the red trigger button to launch your laser torpedoes.

THE FUNCTION KEYS

OPTION key—to select a skill level

Before starting your mission, choose a skill level. Press the **OPTION** key one or more times until your chosen skill level displays at the bottom of the TV screen. (You can also press the letter "O" to select a skill level.)

You may choose from four skill levels. Each successive level increases in difficulty by adding another cavern. The levels are:

NOVICE	Caverns 1, 2, and base
PILOT	Caverns 1, 2, 3, and base
WARRIOR	Caverns 1, 2, 3, 4, and base
COMMANDER	Caverns 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and base

Begin with the **NOVICE** level to get used to maneuvering your fighter. Then go on to the more difficult levels.

Each time you escape and begin another mission, the cavern display moves faster, making maneuvering your fighter more difficult. All skill levels have this feature.

SELECT key—to pause

Press the **SELECT** key to freeze the action . . . if you need to catch your breath before facing ever craftier Martian tactics. (You can also press the letter "H" to freeze the action.) Warning! if you're escaping from the caverns, the bomb timer doesn't stop! Press the **SELECT** key again to resume your mission.

START key--to begin

Press the START key when you're ready to face the Martians. (You can also press the letter "S" to start your mission.)

SYSTEM RESET--to abort a mission

Press the SYSTEM RESET key at any time to abort your mission and return to the CAVERNS OF MARS title screen (see "First Display Screen").

UNDERTAKING YOUR MISSION

MISSION BRIEFING

The terrain and instrument display panel

Once you press the START key, your fighter is poised at the cavern entrance, near the top of the screen. Within a few seconds, your fighter starts its descent, which you control with your joystick.

An instrument panel across the bottom of the TV screen displays vital information: the score counter, cavern level, fuel gauge and number of remaining lives.

The SCORE keeps track of points you earn during an invasion (see "Scoring").

The black number or word in the line reading

1 2 3 4 5 BASE

indicates your current cavern level.

The FUEL gauge shows the amount of fuel left to complete your mission. It automatically adjusts whenever you refuel.

The blue spaceships symbolize your number of remaining lives.

Your mission

Your mission is twofold. First, you must descend through all the caverns for your chosen skill level, destroying as many enemy rockets, fuel tanks, space mines, and radar transmitters as possible. You earn points for each item you destroy, and you absorb precious fuel from some of them for later stages of your mission. Second, once you reach the base cavern, you must activate the fusion bomb by landing on it. Then retrace your path to the surface. If you reach the surface before the bomb explodes, you begin another mission. You can invade headquarters and escape to the surface as many as five times. But if a bomb explodes before you reach the top of the cavern, your mission is over.

You have five lives in which to succeed. Each time your fighter crashes into a cavern wall or a Martian object or runs out of fuel, you lose one life. Whenever you lose a life, your fighter finds itself back at the beginning of the cavern in which you lost that life.

Martian defense system obstacles

Before starting your mission you need to know about the Martian defense system. According to interplanetary intelligence, reaching Martian Headquarters is incredibly difficult. Each of the five levels you penetrate has its own obstacles. Scouts have spotted the following defenses you have to destroy (using your laser torpedoes):

FUEL TANKS

These stationary tanks hold precious rocket fuel. Destroy them with your laser torpedoes to release the fuel you need for the deeper caverns.

RADAR TRANSMITTERS

These stationary, white objects signal Martian Headquarters of intruders.

CREON ROCKETS

These high-speed, white rockets defend the caverns.

PYXIAS ROCKETS

These red rockets refuel Creon rockets. But you can siphon off their fuel by destroying them with your laser torpedoes.

LASER GATES

These energy gates prevent your continued descent. Your laser torpedoes are useless against them and your fighter disintegrates instantly upon contact with one. Intelligence reports indicate some are predictable, but others open and close at random.

SPACE MINES

These deadly white, diamond-shaped mines criss-cross the narrow cavern passageways, trying to block your path. Their movements are unpredictable and you must destroy or dodge them. Any contact with a space mine obliterates your fighter.

FUSION BOMB

This ultimate Martian weapon is hidden deep within the base cavern. You can land on it to arm it without being destroyed. Its timer, once set, can't be deactivated.

THE IMPORTANCE OF FUEL

You have 99 units of fuel when you start your mission and at the start of each life. Your fighter can't hold more than 99 units at a time. As you travel through the caverns, you use up fuel units. If you run out, you lose one life. Therefore, you need to refuel during your descent by destroying Martian fuel tanks and Pyxias rockets.

Once you reach Martian Headquarters in the base level, you're allocated a certain amount of fuel for your escape, depending on the skill level you chose. You use one unit of fuel every second during your escape, with no way to accumulate more.

Skill level	Fuel allocation for escape
Novice	30 units
Pilot	55 units
Warrior	75 units
Commander	98 units

SCORING

You score points for every Martian object you destroy and for the distance you travel through each cavern. At the end of the game, both your score and the high score display. Points earned for objects destroyed are:

White objects: 200 points	Red objects: 150 points
-----	-----
Creon rocket	Fuel tank
Radar transmitter	Pyxias rocket
Space mine	

You also gain points for the distance you travel through each cavern. The deeper the cavern, the more points you score. The points earned for traveling through each cavern in a single life are:

Cavern 1	1280 points
Cavern 2	4000 points
Cavern 3	3840 points
Cavern 4	5120 points
Cavern 5	6400 points

You don't score points for flying in or out of the base level. Once you leave the base level on your escape to the surface, you begin scoring points again.

Note. The scores for each skill level differ greatly, because the number of caverns differs for each skill level.

Your score displays at the end of the game. If, on your descent, you lose all five lives, the message GAME SCORE displays on the screen, along with your points earned and the high score. To begin another mission, press the START key. If you succeed in your mission, however, you automatically start another mission at the outermost cavern, since you're obviously the Terra IV High Command's ace pilot!

GAME TIPS

CAVERN MANEUVERS

When invading the caverns, stay as close to the bottom of the screen as possible. This tactic gives you more time to slow down or stop your fighter while the display continues moving.

LAUNCHING YOUR LASER TORPEDOES

To launch repeated shots, hold down the red trigger button on your joystick without releasing it between shots.

SURVIVING THE LASER GATES

When approaching the laser gates in Cavern 3, stay at the bottom of the screen. Stop immediately in front of the laser gate and wait for it to complete its cycle. When it blinks off temporarily, continue through the gate. If you encounter groups of laser gates, proceed through the gates one at a time as described. Don't try to go through more than one gate without stopping at each one.

SURVIVING THE SPACE MINES

The best way to survive space mines is to destroy them with your laser torpedoes. To do that, keep your fighter close to the bottom of the screen, giving yourself enough time to destroy the entire group. Not all space mines move the same way. Some move at random, whereas others blink on and off.

EARNING MAXIMUM POINTS

You earn the most points by using up all five lives, because each new life starts you at the beginning of a cavern. Then, you earn more points for the distance you travel and the objects you destroy. Going through cavern 5 as many times as possible earns you the most points.

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ATARI PROGRAM EXCHANGE

REVIEW FORM

We're interested in your experiences with APX programs and documentation, both favorable and unfavorable. Many software authors are willing and eager to improve their programs if they know what users want. And, of course, we want to know about any bugs that slipped by us, so that the software author can fix them. We also want to know whether our documentation is meeting your needs. You are our best source for suggesting improvements! Please help us by taking a moment to fill in this review sheet. Fold the sheet in thirds and seal it so that the address on the bottom of the back becomes the envelope front. Thank you for helping us!

1. Name and APX number of program _____

2. If you have problems using the program, please describe them here.

3. What do you especially like about this program?

4. What do you think the program's weaknesses are?

5. How can the catalog description be more accurate and/or comprehensive?

6. On a scale of 1 to 10, 1 being "poor" and 10 being "excellent", please rate the following aspects of this program?

- _____ Easy to use
- _____ User-oriented (e.g., menus, prompts, clear language)
- _____ Enjoyable
- _____ Self-instructive
- _____ Useful (non-game software)
- _____ Imaginative graphics and sound

7. Describe any technical errors you found in the user instructions (please give page numbers).

8. What did you especially like about the user instructions?

9. What revisions or additions would improve these instructions?

10. On a scale of 1 to 10, 1 representing "poor" and 10 representing "excellent", how would you rate the user instructions and why?

11. Other comments about the software or user instructions:



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[seal here]